

National Association of County Veterans Service Officers



Burial Benefits

VA Burial Benefits Program

The VA burial benefits program is intended to “assist” the survivors of deceased eligible veterans in meeting the funeral and burial costs associated with the veteran's death.

In addition, certain family members may be entitled to some types of burial benefits

Burial Related Benefits

- A plot and/or interment allowance
- A burial allowance for service-connected deaths, or non-service-connected deaths
- VA does not pay for deaths in service
- Free headstone, marker, or medallion
- Possible payment for conveying remains
- Burial in a National Cemetery
- Presidential Memorial Certificates

Burial Allowance Service-Connected Death



- Up to \$2000 for a death on/after 9-11-01
- Up to \$1500 for a death prior to 9-10-01
- No time limit for application

Burial Allowance Eligibility

Service-Connected Death

- Service-connected disabilities must have been the direct or contributory cause of death as determined by the rating activity (VARO)
- For compensation established under 38 USC 1151 (VA Malpractice) - the service-connected burial allowance will not be paid. Eligibility for the NSC amount remains, and may be paid.

Burial Allowance

Non-Service-Connected Death

- Up to \$734 toward the veteran's funeral and burial expenses
 - IF vet died in a VA medical facility
- Up to \$300 toward the veteran's funeral and burial expenses
 - If the vet was not in a VA medical facility
- File VA Form 21-530 within two years after the burial

10-1-2013 Rates

Burial Allowance Eligibility

Non-Service-Connected Death

At the time of death, the veteran was:

- In receipt of VA pension or compensation
- Receiving military retired pay in lieu of compensation

Burial Allowance

Non-Service-Connected Death

- Died while traveling to or from a VA examination or for VA treatment or care
 - authorized travel
 - at VA expense
- Died on or after October 9, 1996 while a patient in a VA-approved state nursing home

Burial Allowance

Non-Service-Connected Death

- Died while hospitalized by the VA
- In a VA nursing home
- In a VA domiciliary
- Had a claim pending and would have been entitled prior to date of death

Burial Allowance

Non-Service-Connected Death

A Veteran who died while in the Home Based Care Program would not be eligible for burial benefits as it is not considered the same as VA hospitalization.



Who Can Claim Service Connected or NSC Death Burial Allowance

- The funeral director (if bill unpaid)
- The person whose personal funds were used to pay such expenses
- The estate when the estate funds were used

Plot Allowance

- Up to \$734.00 if veteran dies from non-service-connected causes
- The benefit is payable even though the veteran may have prepaid the funeral expenses

10-01-13 rates

Plot or Interment Allowance

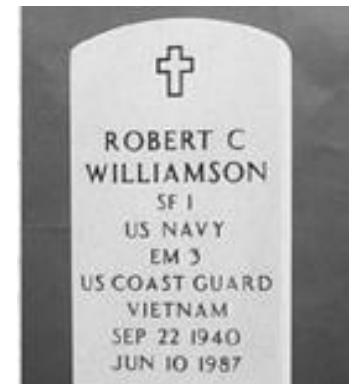
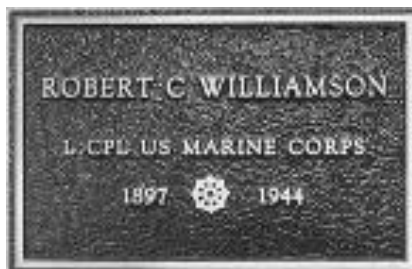
Paid in addition to the non-service-connected burial allowance if burial is not in a national cemetery or other cemetery under the jurisdiction of the United States

Plot Allowance Eligibility

- Discharged for a disability incurred or aggravated in line of duty
- In receipt of compensation or pension at the time of death or should have been entitled
- Properly hospitalized by the VA at the time of death
- A wartime veteran whose body is unclaimed
- Under certain circumstances - see 38 CFR 3.1604(d) - a state or other government agency may claim the plot allowance

Headstone or Marker

Any veteran eligible for burial in a VA National Cemetery is also eligible for a government-provided headstone or marker



Who Can Order a Headstone, Marker or Medallion?

Only the following individuals may apply for a headstone, marker or medallion:

- Decedent's next-of-kin (NOK)

- Authorized representative on behalf of decedent

- Authorized representative on behalf of next-of-kin

If someone other than the NOK is applying the application package must include a written statement signed by the NOK or decedent authorizing that person (the applicant) to apply for this benefit.

A notarized statement is not required for these purposes.

Headstone or marker

- When burial is in a private cemetery VA Form 40-1330 must be submitted with a copy of the veteran's discharge document
- Fax to Memorial Programs at 1-800-455-7143
 - Death Certificate is not required
- Headstones and markers are provided for eligible spouses and dependents only when buried in a national, military base, or state veterans' cemetery

“In Memory Of”

Headstones or Markers

ordered for -

- Un-recovered or unidentified remains
- Buried at sea
- Donated to science
- Cremated and scattered

Private Headstone Medallion



Private Headstone Medallion

- The medallion is currently available in three sizes, 5 inches, 3 inches, and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches
- Each medallion is inscribed with the word VETERAN across the top and the Branch of Service at the bottom
- Eligible veterans are entitled to either a traditional Government headstone or marker, or the new medallion, but not both.

Private Headstone Medallion

Use VA Form 40-1330M

- Send with copy of DD-214
- Fax to Memorial Programs at
1-800-455-7143
- Death Certificate not required

Burial Flags



- Only one burial flag may be provided per veteran
- All veterans are eligible for a burial flag

Burial Flags

- All are eligible for a burial flag
- This includes those with one term in the National Guard, even if never deployed

Burial Flags

- Burial flags may be obtained from VA Regional Offices, National Cemeteries and most U.S. post offices
- Submit VA Form 21-2008, Application for US Flag for Burial Purposes, with a copy of the veteran's discharge papers at any of these locations

National Guard Service

National Guard Members/Former Members

- Eligible for burial flag not for VA marker
- Did not have "federal service"
 - 38 CFR 38.620

Retired National Guard Members

- Eligible for burial flag
- Eligible for grave marker if entitled to retired pay
 - 38 CFR 38.630

Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC)

An engraved paper certificate:

- Signed by the current President
- To honor the memory of honorably discharged veterans

PMC

- Eligible recipients include the deceased veteran's next of kin and family members
- More than one certificate may be provided
- VA Form 40-0247 with a copy of the veteran's discharge documents

PMC

Or - Mail the request to:

Presidential Memorial Certificates(41A1C)
National Cemetery Administration
5109 Russell Road
Quantico VA 22134-3903

PMC



Military Funeral Honors



Military Funeral Honors

- Upon the family's request, the law requires that every eligible veteran receive a military funeral honors ceremony to include folding and presenting the United States burial flag and the playing of Taps by either bugler or electronic means

Military Funeral Honors

- A military funeral honors detail consists of two or more uniformed military persons with at least one a member of the veteran's branch of service
- The funeral home director should request military funeral honors

Military Funeral Honors

Web site for information:

www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil

Click on service and state tabs to get
contact phone number

NATIONAL CEMETERY BURIAL

Burial benefits include:

- the gravesite (one per veteran - including eligible family members)
- a headstone or marker
- opening and closing of the grave
- perpetual care

VA National Cemeteries may have columbaria or gravesites for cremated remains.

Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery

Individuals generally eligible for burial in a VA National Cemetery are:

- Veterans discharged or separated from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable
- Service members died on active duty
- Persons entitled to retired pay as a result of 20 years service with a reserve component

Eligibility for Burial in a VA National Cemetery

- - A member of a Reserve Component or the National Guard, whose death occurs under honorable conditions, in specific circumstances
- - Members of the Reserve Officer's Training Corps whose death occurs under honorable conditions, in specific circumstances
- - A spouse, surviving spouse, remarried spouse, minor child or unmarried adult child of any of the above-listed eligible individuals

VA National Cemetery Burial

- Normally, funeral directors contact the cemetery, make arrangements.
- Various local rules/regulations.
- Normally, weekday burial/inurnments only.
No weekend scheduling.
- Each area different; contact your local national cemetery, get their information handouts and guidelines.
- Arlington - not a VA cemetery - completely different rules and procedures.

Arlington National Cemetery

- One of two administered by the Department of the Army. (Soldiers and Airmen Home, Washington DC, is the other).
- Requires honorable service.
- Weekday services only, scheduled in advance. No reservations.
- More restrictive rules for burial, interment of ashes.
- Normally, arrangements made by Funeral Director. Scheduling is per needs of Arlington, not requestor.

Arlington - Eligibility

- Active duty, active duty retirees.
- Reserve retiree over 60, receiving, or eligible to receive, retired pay.
- Veteran medically separated prior to 10/1/1949 with at least 30% initial rating.
- Former POW who died on/after 11/30/93.
- Awarded Purple Heart or higher.

Arlington – Eligibility (cont.)

- President, former President, other high ranking U.S. government officials.
- Eligible family members of those already buried in Arlington.
- Requestor must provide proof of eligibility.
- Rules change!! Always check for current information.

Arlington - Other Info

- Remains handled differently; different eligibility rules.
- Exceptions - by Secretary of Army, very rare. Requires extraordinary justification.
- For more information check the website (www.arlingtoncemetery.org) or call the office (703) 607-8585

National Guard

With no active federal service - ineligible

Where to Get More Information

- Veterans Benefits Manual
- www.va.gov